



**United States Department of Justice  
United States Attorney's Office  
District of Minnesota**

**Frank J. Magill,  
Acting United States Attorney**

David Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist  
(612) 664-5684; cell: (612) 730-2251

# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday, June 2, 2008

## **23 indicted in drug trafficking operation**

Twenty-three people were indicted last month in federal court in connection with a drug trafficking operation involving crack cocaine, ecstasy and marijuana, as well as firearms possession, money laundering and carjacking. The indictment was unsealed May 29 following the arrest of 19 defendants, many of whom appeared in court last week.

The charges listed in the indictment, filed on May 7, include: conspiracy to possess firearms in furtherance of the drug trafficking operation, money laundering in connection with the drug trafficking conspiracy, possession of firearms by prohibited persons, possession with intent to distribute narcotics, distribution of narcotics, possession of firearms during and in furtherance of drug trafficking offenses, and carjacking.

The 23 individuals charged are: Mohammad Queadir Abdul-Ahad, 27, Minneapolis; James Edward King Jr., 26, Minneapolis; Steven Michael Gant, 27, Minneapolis; Robert Freeman El, 39, unknown address; David Eugene Osborne, 29, Tonka Bay; Dentell Wesly Green, 23, Minneapolis; Akbar Saleem Abdul-Ahad, 24, St. Louis Park; Marques Taliaferro Martin, 25, Minneapolis; Buster Travoire Roosevelt Gaston, 31, St. Paul; Robert Lester Herron, 24, Minneapolis; Christine Joanne Clark, 37, St. Louis Park; Michael Douglas Reid, 32, unknown address; Vito Corleone Williams, 24, St. Paul; Noah Matthew Gillman, 31, Minneapolis; Bryson Deshawn Wilson, 22, Richfield; Calvin Cotton, 21, Minneapolis; John James Dean Wooldridge, 23, St. Paul; Kevin Lewis, unknown age, unknown address; Benjamin Deondry Adams, 18, Minneapolis; Anthony Freeman Richmond, 25, Minneapolis; Jimmy Lee Martin, 20, Minneapolis; Donte Martin, 28, Minneapolis, and Chiffon Williams, 48, Minneapolis.

“Organized drug trafficking erodes quality of life, preys on human weakness and threatens neighborhoods,” said Bernard Zapor, Special Agent in Charge of the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) St. Paul Field Division. “Many dedicated law enforcement officers, criminal intelligence analysts, support professionals and prosecutors pour their collective hearts into the protection of our threatened neighborhoods. Their commitment to investigations like this continues.”

“The Drug Enforcement Administration is proud to have been part of a successful drug law enforcement team with ATF, Internal Revenue Service, Minneapolis Police Department, Violent Offender Task Force, Minnesota Gang Strike Force, and the United States Attorney’s Office in this investigation,” said Dan Moren, Assistant Special Agent in Charge with the DEA’s Minneapolis District Office. “The collaboration of federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel resulted in dismantling a significant drug trafficking organization. This enforcement operation has positively impacted the quality of life for many of our neighborhoods.”

The indictment alleges that from 1999 through May 6, 2008, 22 of the defendants conspired with each other and others to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 50 or more grams of cocaine base; 5 kilograms or more of cocaine hydrochloride; the semisynthetic psychedelic drug MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy; and marijuana.

The indictment also alleges that from 1999 through May 6, 2008, eight of the defendants (Mohammad Abdul-Ahad, King, Gant, El, Osborne, Akbar Abdul-Ahad, Marques Martin and Cotton) conspired with each other and others to possess firearms in furtherance of and in relation to the drug trafficking operation.

It also alleges that Chiffon Williams knowingly and intentionally maintained a stash house in the 2600 block of Cedar Avenue in Minneapolis for the purpose of storing, distributing and packaging controlled substances.

Mohammad Abdul-Ahad and Chiffon Williams were also charged with one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering in connection with the drug trafficking operation charged in the indictment. The indictment alleges that Mohammad Abdul-Ahad and Chiffon Williams knowingly and intentionally conspired with others to transfer proceeds generated from distributing controlled substances to others from May 2004 through May 6, 2008, including transferring the proceeds into separate bank accounts and then using the proceeds to purchase motor vehicles.

The following additional offenses were charged in the indictment:

Marques Martin was charged with one count of conspiring to possess a firearm during and in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense; one count of use of a firearm during a drug trafficking offense; and three counts of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The indictment alleges that Marques Martin knowingly and unlawfully possessed a .45-caliber, semi-automatic handgun on Jan. 23, 2008. It also alleges that on March 11, 2008, Marques Martin knowingly and unlawfully possessed a .40-caliber, semi-automatic handgun; and on April 10, 2008, Marques Martin knowingly and unlawfully possessed a 9-millimeter, semi-automatic pistol. Marques Martin was convicted in Hennepin County on charges of assault, burglary and fleeing a peace officer in 2003, 2004 and 2006.

Jimmy Martin was charged with one count of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Jimmy Martin, the indictment alleges, unlawfully and knowingly possessed a 9-millimeter, semi-automatic pistol on April 10, 2008. Martin was convicted in Ramsey County on burglary charges in 2006.

Akbar Abdul-Ahad, Jimmy Martin, Donte Martin and Lewis were also charged with one count of aiding and abetting the use of a firearm during a drug trafficking offense. The indictment alleges that on March 11, 2008, Akbar Abdul-Ahad, Marques Martin, Jimmy Martin, Donte Martin and Lewis did knowingly aid and abet each other in carrying and using a .40-caliber, semi-automatic handgun in relation to a drug trafficking offense.

King was also charged with one count of carjacking; one count of use of a firearm during a crime of violence; and two counts of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The indictment alleges that on May 7, 2004, King knowingly and intentionally, with the intent to cause death and serious bodily harm, took a motor vehicle by force, violence and intimidation from another person; and that on both May 7 and 27, King knowingly and unlawfully possessed a .45-caliber firearm. King was convicted for drug-related crimes in Hennepin County in 2002.

Gant was charged with one count of possession with intent to distribute cocaine base; and one count of distribution of cocaine base. Osborne was also charged with one count of distribution of cocaine base and one count of possession with intent to distribute cocaine base. The indictment alleges that on Jan. 24, 2005, Gant knowingly and intentionally possessed with intent to distribute approximately 8.93 grams of cocaine base; on Dec. 8, 2006, Gant and Osborne knowingly and intentionally distributed approximately 55.5 grams of cocaine base; and on Dec. 12, 2006, Osborne knowingly and intentionally distributed approximately 61.9 grams of cocaine base.

Wilson was also charged with one count of possession with intent to distribute cocaine base and one count of possession of a firearm by a prohibited person. Wilson, the indictment alleges, knowingly and intentionally possessed with intent to distribute approximately 27 grams of cocaine base on March 7, 2008, and unlawfully and knowingly possessed a .357 Magnum revolver. Wilson was convicted in Hennepin County on domestic abuse charges in 2006.

Gaston was also charged with two counts of distribution of marijuana, one count of possession with intent to distribute marijuana and one count of possession with intent to distribute cocaine. Wooldridge was also charged with one count of distribution of marijuana. Gaston and Wooldridge, the indictment alleges, knowingly and intentionally distributed approximately 442 grams of a substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana on April 3, 2008, and also alleges that on April 8, 2008, Gaston knowingly and intentionally distributed approximately 414 grams of a substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana.

The indictment also alleges that on April 15, 2008, Gaston knowingly and intentionally possessed with intent to distribute approximately 2.1 pounds of a substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana and approximately 311.84 grams of a substance containing a detectable amount of cocaine hydrochloride.

Vito Williams was charged with one count of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Vito Williams, the indictment alleges, unlawfully and knowingly possessed a 9-millimeter, semi-automatic handgun on April 15, 2008. Williams was convicted in Hennepin County in 2003 and 2004 on robbery and firearms charges.

If convicted, the defendants face potential maximum penalties of life in prison on the counts of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute controlled substances, possession with intent to distribute cocaine and cocaine base; 20 years on the conspiracy to possess a

firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking counts; five years on each count of use of firearms during a crime of violence; 20 years on the counts of possession with intent to distribute marijuana; 20 years on the count of money laundering; 10 years on each count of felon in possession of a firearm; and 15 years on the carjacking count. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the ATF, the DEA, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation Division, the Minneapolis Police Department, Violent Offender Task Force, and the Minnesota Gang Strike Force. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys W. Anders Folk and Nancy Brasel.

-30--

An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.